

# Here and Now: An evaluation of Barnardo's trauma, bereavement and loss service in schools

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## Childhood Bereavement in Schools

In the United Kingdom it is estimated that 92% of young people will experience a bereavement of a 'close' relationship that includes family, friends and pets, before the age of 16 (Harrison & Harrington, 2001). In Scotland, a more recent survey found that 79% of secondary school pupils, aged 12 to 17 years, have experienced the death of someone important to them (Del Carpio, Rasmussen, & Paul, 2018). Bereavement during childhood is therefore a majority experience, yet whilst it may be a universal part of growing up, experiencing a death can also be a major life event that places a young person at increased risk of a range of negative outcomes. For example, it is suggested that bereaved young people are at greater risk of developing depressive symptoms (Harrison & Harrington, 2001), being abused (Cross, 2002) and teenage pregnancy (Sweeting, West, & Richards, 1998). Vulnerable populations of young people, such as those involved in offending, are also more likely than the general population to have experienced multiple, parental or traumatic bereavements (Finlay & Jones, 2000; Vaswani, 2008; Vaswani, 2014).

For school communities, bereavement is a common and ongoing concern not least due to its prevalence but also the impact that it can have on a young person's wellbeing. It is estimated that up to 70% of schools will have a bereaved pupil on their roll at any one time (Holland, 1993) and there is evidence to suggest that childhood bereavement can affect school attendance and academic achievement in both the short and long-term (Dyregrov, 2004; Haine, Ayers, Sandler, & Wolchik, 2008). School communities are recognised as having a key role in engaging and supporting bereaved children (Alisic, 2012; Holland, 2008; Lowton & Higginson, 2003; Reid, 2002). The existing relationships that school staff have with young people means that they are often well-placed to identify and support young people experiencing bereavement via a timely, sensitive and 'light-touch' approach (Holland & McLennan, 2015:118). From this perspective, supporting young people experiencing bereavement in school can be viewed as an early intervention approach, which might mitigate the need for later, and more complex, interventions (Holland & McLennan, 2015; Vaswani, Paul, & Papadodimitraki, 2016).

The importance of young people being able to access informal support from within their existing communities and specialist support when, and if, needed has been highlighted (Jones, Deane, & Keegan, 2015). In Scotland the ability for young people to access support is reinforced by a number of national policy documents including the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Government, 2008) both of which set out an entitlement for all young people to experience and benefit from good mental health and wellbeing. Nevertheless, it has been reported that some young people do not experience positive support from their schools (Chowns, 2013) and specialist bereavement services are not consistently available. Moreover, whilst school staff see bereavement support as part of their role, there are limited opportunities for training on bereavement and staff predominately feel that they lack the necessary expertise (Holland, 2003; Lowton & Higginson, 2003; Paul, 2015). Thus, whilst schools might be in a good position to support pupils experiencing bereavement, there are a number of key challenges relating to staff confidence and expertise as well as access to more specialised support when needed.

In recognition of the opportunity that schools have in providing timely bereavement support and in response to some of the challenges described above, this report outlines the development, implementation and delivery of a schools-based service, Here and Now, delivered by Barnardo's Scotland that was designed to enhance support that schools provide to pupils affected by trauma, bereavement and loss. By documenting and sharing the key learning from this study, it is hoped that school-based bereavement support can continue to be enhanced and improved.

## Background to the Barnardo's school service

Research in Polmont Young Offenders' Institution (HMP & YOI Polmont) found that more than 90% of the young males within the institution had been bereaved of a family member or friend, and more than three-quarters (77%) had experienced at least one traumatic bereavement (Vaswani, 2014:37). In response to these findings HMP & YOI Polmont implemented a series of developments known as 'Our Lives with Others'. This three-pronged approach aimed to: increase staff awareness of the prevalence and impact of trauma, bereavement and loss through awareness-raising training; better meet the needs of young people through the piloting of a specialist trauma, bereavement and loss service, Here and Now, delivered by Barnardo's Scotland; and create organisational and culture change in part through a sequenced and more joined-up approach to service provision that would help create a more 'trauma-informed' establishment.

The developments within HMP & YOI Polmont were externally evaluated and deemed to be successful (Vaswani et al., 2016). More than 200 members of staff attended the awareness-raising training and demonstrated a significant increase in knowledge, skills and confidence over the course of the two day training. The specialist service worked with 50 young men during the course of the evaluation and there was a significant decrease in their trauma symptomology by the end of the intervention. Furthermore, although certain values, attitudes and practices were hard to shift, there was evidence of a small step towards organisational culture change. The report concluded that:

"the strategic vision appeared to be slowly beginning to change the nature of the organisation. No-one seemed to underestimate the distance that still needed to be travelled, or naively thought that everyone was on board with the direction of that travel, but the fact that a journey had been embarked upon was undisputed" (Vaswani et al., 2016:37).

Such positive achievements did not mask a number of areas where more work needed to be done. One of the most significant of these was that the scope of the work, and therefore the progress made, was confined to the establishment itself. Yet there was evidence that many of these bereavements had occurred much earlier in childhood and that the young people often had not received the support they needed at that time (Vaswani, 2014; Vaswani et al., 2016). The report described the sense of frustration felt among some of the participants that positive outcomes were harder to achieve by the time a young person reached the prison gates and concluded that "*better early intervention and community provision ... might help to stem the flow of young people to Polmont*" (Vaswani et al., 2016:43).

Following the success of the work done in HMP & YOI Polmont, Barnardo's received further funding from the Scottish Government to transfer the learning from 'Our Lives with Others' to three secondary schools across Scotland. The purpose of this funding was to pilot a trauma,

bereavement and loss service in order to respond to young people's experiences of these issues at a much earlier stage in their lives, primarily through direct work with young people but also supporting the relevant adults in the young person's wider environment. The initial service design was thus three-pronged and sought to: provide direct support to young people through a 10 week programme of one-to-one sessions; facilitate capacity building activities for parents/carers; and offer professional development opportunities for school staff.

Funding for the Here and Now schools service was agreed in early 2017. The aim from Barnardo's was to commence preparatory work with the three secondary schools who had been identified to pilot the project at an early stage: direct work with young people was intended to start following the Easter break in April 2017. However, at the same time Barnardo's underwent a period of organisational restructuring, with changes to the senior management leading on the project, as well as a reorganisation of general staffing. The time taken for the organisational restructuring to be completed, as well as the impact of the school summer break, meant that the service in each of the schools did not launch until October 2017. With Scottish Government funding due to expire in March 2018, this reduced time frame meant that the primary focus was simply on providing a service to young people.

This partial implementation of Here and Now affected the service's throughput: the accompanying activities were designed to raise awareness of the service as well as increase school staff's confidence and ability to identify trauma, bereavement and loss issues, broach initial discussions and make appropriate referrals. The service originally planned to work with up to 40 young people across the three schools involved in the pilot, but had only received 18 referrals by the end of March 2018. While all of these referrals were accepted for Here and Now, there was a significant rate of disengagement from the young people over the 10 week period of planned intervention, with only five young people completing the majority of the ten sessions. Engagement was understood to be affected by the appropriateness of the referrals made in relation to the work being undertaken, and the ongoing complexities in the lives of the referred young people which meant that they were not always present at school or willing to take part. The limited implementation also potentially affected outcomes, as the supplementary strands were designed to build capacity in the young person's wider environment (i.e. with parents/carers and teachers), in order to provide ongoing informal support following the end of the formal intervention. Although some work with parents/carers and school staff was undertaken, this was on an ad-hoc basis rather than the awareness-raising, development and support activities that were originally planned.

## Service evaluation: design and methods

The original purpose of the evaluation was to document the learning arising from the pilot and generate new knowledge and understanding about the trauma, bereavement and loss needs of pupils in secondary school settings and the effectiveness of interventions with this population. The aims of the research were to:

- Document and describe the Here and Now service within the schools
- Conduct a needs analysis of the pupils referred to the Here and Now service
- Gather feedback on the experiences of the service from key stakeholders
- Assess the short-term impact of the service on individuals and also the wider environment



The delayed and partial implementation of Here and Now in the schools not only affected the implementation of the service, and the referrals and throughput, but in turn also significantly restricted the scope of the research. Smaller than anticipated sample sizes, and substantial levels of missing data meant that methods had to be revised and that it was not possible to document the outcomes from the service. As a result, any conclusions drawn from the data can only be tentative.

## Ethics

The research was given approval by the School of Social Work and Social Policy Ethics Committee at the University of Strathclyde; the Barnardo's Research and Evaluation Committee and the Local Authority ethics committees in which the schools were situated. This scrutiny helped ensure the safety and well-being of participants and researchers.

## Participants

The service ran in three secondary schools across two locations: two city schools, and one located in a large town. Two schools were non-denominational and the third was a faith school. The schools varied in size: approximately 150 pupils; 400-700 pupils; and 1000 pupils respectively. The school in the large town was selected for the pilot as Barnardo's had pre-existing links and workers within the school. The two city schools were selected for the pilot due to the high proportion of pupils who were affected by parental imprisonment<sup>1</sup>.

All children who received a service, and their parents or carers, were eligible to participate. Out of 18 young people who received a service, 15 opted to have their anonymised data shared with the research team. Four young people and one parent/carer also agreed to be interviewed.

Key professional groups involved in the service development and delivery were also invited to participate in the evaluation. Overall, 13 professionals agreed to participate in the study, seven of which were school staff and six of which were Barnardo's staff. The number of school staff participants was lower than anticipated: as Here and Now was unable to undertake the professional development work with larger groups of school staff the number of potential participants involved with the service was significantly reduced, and therefore limited to key individuals. Head teachers in all schools declined to take part in the evaluation and suggested that staff from the senior management teams, who had worked more directly with the service, were more appropriate participants. As a result, of the seven school staff who participated in the research, two identified themselves as senior management, two as year heads and three as guidance staff. Participants were drawn from each of the three schools: one, two and four staff members respectively. Of the six Barnardo's staff members who agreed to take part, three were project staff responsible for delivering Here and Now within schools and three were senior managers. Two out of the three Here and Now staff were newly recruited to Barnardo's and had a range of previous skills and experiences in trauma work. Funding was provided directly for the pilot and the Here and Now worker in the large town. In the city locations two staff members with workload capacity were assigned to Here and Now, alongside their existing remit.

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<sup>1</sup> There was misunderstanding about the purpose of the intervention across some of the schools, as noted in section 1.2.

## Measures

Anonymised data was obtained from the Barnardo's service database to gather relevant referral information about the 15 young people who agreed to share this information. This included information on: referral reasons, demographics and background information, including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) (Felitti et al., 1998). At the start and end of the service the Barnardo's workers also administered an adapted Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children (Briere et al., 2001), although the adaptations made mean that this tool is not comparable with other studies that use the same measure, nor are there any functional clinical cut-offs. The version used was a 35-item tool that recorded the frequency of trauma symptoms such as: going away in my mind, trying not to think; worrying about things; remembering things I don't want to; bad dreams or nightmares; feeling tense etc. Items were rated from 1 (never feel like this) to 4 (feel like this all the time).

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with the four young people and the parent/carer who agreed to participate in the research in a suitable location of their choosing, typically school or home. The interviews covered topics such as their experience and reflections on Here and Now, and their experience and perceptions of wider support for young people around issues of trauma, bereavement and loss (see Appendix 1 & 2). Interviews lasted on average 20 minutes, were audio-recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

Focus groups were initially planned with school staff in order to capture perspectives on key themes, including the role of schools in supporting trauma, bereavement and loss; the support for pupils and staff; and the impact of the wider school environment. However, for a range of reasons, such as staffing capacity and logistics within the schools, only one focus group, involving three guidance staff, was held in one of the three secondary schools in the study. The focus group took place in the school office and lasted approximately 40 minutes. Participants did not consent to the focus group being recorded and this significantly reduced the data available to be analysed. Due to the complexities around using focus groups, face-to-face interviews were therefore held with the other four school staff participants, using the adapted focus group schedule (Appendix 3). The interviews were held in school, in a private classroom and/or office, and lasted on average 30 minutes. Three of these participants agreed for the interviews to be audio-recorded and one declined. Those interviews which were audio-recorded were transcribed verbatim.

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were held with Barnardo's staff in a suitable location of their choosing. These interviews focused on the school environment, supporting staff, supporting young people, and the development, design and delivery of the service (see Appendix 4). The interviews lasted on average 30 minutes, were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim with permission.

## Analysis

Descriptive statistics were produced on the young people referred to the service, rather than young people who completed the service, using SPSS Version 25 (IBM Corp, 2017). It was not possible to undertake statistical analysis on the outcome data due to the amount of completion data available for young people.

All qualitative data from the interviews and focus groups was initially manually coded for emerging themes by the first author, using a thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006).



The analysis was initially focused on the needs and experiences of each distinct group of participants (Barnardo's; schools; young people/carers) and then the analyses were brought together to identify the learning from the overlaps and divergences. The two other authors then each reviewed 50% of the resulting themes and codes. The final themes were subsequently refined and agreed between the three authors.

## The profile of young people referred

As discussed above, the dataset for the 15 young people who opted in to the research was incomplete, this section should therefore be read with caution. Data has only been presented where there was information for at least five young people. Data was collected for six; two; and seven young people from each school respectively, but has been analysed and presented as a single group.

The gender of the young people was only documented for eight young people, and five (63%) were females, and three (38%) were male. The mean age was 14, and ranged between 12 and 16. In relation to their background experiences, five had experienced at least one bereavement (and two had experienced multiple bereavements). For nine young people it was not known whether they had experienced any bereavements. Other common adverse childhood experiences included: mental illness within the family (11 young people, with data missing for four); parental separation (nine young people, with missing data for six); physical abuse (five young people, with missing data for 10) and emotional abuse (five young people, with missing data for 10).

The amount and depth of information about the referral reason varied significantly across the files. Analysis of initial assessment information shows a range of trauma, bereavement and loss experiences in relation to the referrals. Whilst the primary referral concern was not always clear it was apparent that trauma, bereavement and loss experiences all appeared to play some part in the referral of a young person, with the combination of concerns perhaps leading to the decision to refer to the service. Loss in its widest sense was a common feature in the young people's lives, although did not appear to be a strong primary referral indicator. For example, a number of young people had experienced loss through moves of residence, either within family and care settings or between carers. This loss of home or carer was often triggered by Adverse Childhood Experiences such as domestic abuse, neglect or parental mental health issues. The high prevalence of certain Adverse Childhood Experiences (such as parental mental illness) also suggests more subtle and ambiguous losses were features of the children's lives i.e. the psychological 'absence' of a parent with mental health problems, despite their physical 'presence'.

Data gathered from the Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children (TSCC) gives some indication of the issues which they were struggling with at the time of the referral. However, information gathered from the TSCC is patchy, as there were significant gaps in the data. Table 1 presents the seven highest scoring indicators out of a possible 35 indicators. Unfortunately the TSCC was not completed for young people who participated in the post intervention and we are unable to report any changes. Pre and Post TSCC results were only available for five of the young people and therefore it is not possible to accurately report on any change over time. The pre-measure is therefore only reported here as an indicator of need.

Table 1: Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children (pre-service).  $n=15$

Symptom	% experiencing symptom at least 'a lot' of the time	No. experiencing symptom at least 'a lot' of the time
Arguing too much	40%	6
Have trouble concentrating	33%	5
Wanting to break things	29%	4
Getting in to fights	29%	4
Feeling tense	27%	4
Feeling lonely	27%	4
Crying	27%	4

The referral information provided some further insight into the presenting issues for the children and young people. Two referrals appeared to be primarily based on the young person's behaviours, particularly when presented in school, which included disruptive and violent behaviours, yet with little information being shared on potential trauma, bereavement and loss concerns. A further two referrals were made concerning the young people's general mental health, and noted significant anxiety and depression which impacted on their engagement and presentation at school, with little understanding of why this was the case.

## Findings: Key themes

Three broad themes emerged from the data: the value of sufficient groundwork and planning; the centrality of relationships; and the importance of knowledge and confidence among all staff and services that come into contact with bereaved or traumatised young people. These three themes were intertwined and shaped all elements of Here and Now, from service design to service delivery, and ultimately to service user experience. In particular these themes were most prominent at the interface between the three main groups of participants in the fieldwork: young people and their families: school staff and Barnardo's staff. Below we give a brief summary of the themes, their connections and their relevance to the evaluation. We then go on to describe the themes in more detail, highlighting the significance for future learning and development.

The implementation of Here and Now was severely affected by issues faced in the preparation and planning phases of the pilot. A number of potentially unavoidable and unforeseen organisational setbacks reduced the time in which the pilot was operational. This structural upheaval appears to have impacted on the clarity of vision and remit of the service which was presented to schools, which affected organisational understanding, implementation and the appropriateness of referrals. Furthermore, the reduced length of the pilot meant that the time required to allow relationships to develop between staff from Barnardo's and the schools was simply not available, and neither was the time required to form therapeutic relationships with the young people undertaking the service. This knock-on effect of the truncated planning phase was fundamental to the success or otherwise of the service, as it was clear that relationships were important in regards to all aspects of Here and Now.

Trusting and informal relationships were identified as being key to enabling and supporting staff and young people. Forging relationships with schools and understanding the wider school culture was deemed integral to the successful embedding of the service as a schools-based programme. Developing strong relationships between Here and Now staff and young people reduced anxiety about accessing support, promoted engagement and disclosure, and contributed to how positively the young person experienced any intervention. The reduced time for planning and relationship-building meant that the knowledge, skills and confidence needed by adults in the young person's wider environment (i.e teachers and families) was not developed sufficiently to encourage the identification of need, appropriate referrals to the service, or the provision of appropriate and/or complementary support to the young person. A lack of knowledge and confidence on the part of school staff in these areas was noted by both Barnardo's and school staff. Similarly, confidence and knowledge was identified as a key requirement of the Barnardo's staff who are required to confidently lead the Here and Now service within the school setting and also to adapt the intervention approach to respond to the individual needs and stage of each young person.

## Theme 1: The importance of groundwork: preparation and planning

Developing clear and focused foundations between Barnardo's and the schools was identified as key in relation to the successful implementation of Here and Now. The level of pre-existing involvement and interaction between Barnardo's and the schools varied across the three schools and this affected how the school staff and young people engaged with Here and Now staff (see theme two, relationships). Nevertheless, the significance of this groundwork phase was a repeated theme across the interviews and focus groups with school staff and Barnardo's staff. This theme was concerned with time, vision and remit and school culture, each of which will be discussed separately.

### 1.1. Allowing sufficient time

Whilst it was recognised that the time-limited nature of pilot programmes restrict what can be achieved, participants felt that if more time had been given to preparing the schools for their work with Barnardo's, this would have enabled greater clarity around: the aims and objectives of Here and Now; practical considerations of how the service would run; and awareness of any preparatory work that would be required within the schools themselves. Differences that developed between early planning discussions and how the service was ultimately integrated into the school may have led to some misunderstandings:

*"There was a bit of confusion with the school. They seemed to think they didn't need to make referrals for the support...But I had had the initial meeting and conversation and the school from the initial meeting were identifying young people they thought would be really good for it"* Barnardo's staff

*"There wasn't a lot of information going, the programme was relatively new so they said there would possibly be staff training but they didn't give the details of what that would entail and the same with the family"* School staff

It was thus acknowledged by both schools and Barnardo's staff that each school required more time to consider, and then actualise, how Here and Now could be embedded within their wider systems and processes. This process may have better supported the integration and implementation of the service:

*"the more the whole school population would have heard about it and then we might have had a bigger impact, eh, uptake of consultation as a result. So, I think it was probably just around time"* Barnardo's staff

*"Yeah, and giving them a wee bit more time maybe to be able to think about who in the school will take the lead for that as well"* Barnardo's staff

*"What tends to happen within schools is, the [training] slots for those are really booked up quite far in advance, so I think if we'd had longer, we would have had more input because we would have presented to those groups, to bigger groups of staff more often, and really began and really started to embed some of the learning we were hoping to achieve"* Barnardo's staff

This issue of timing during the groundwork phase was also relevant to the preparatory work that is usually done with young people prior to any intervention with Here and Now staff:

*"but because of the timescale and them being quite short, usually we do a lot of work in terms of information gathering before we start with young people... because the project is so short and because we are working on quite a tight timescale, I wasn't able to do that quite as much as I was before"* Barnardo's staff

Thus the limited timescale of the pilot transpired as having a potentially detrimental impact on the way in which referrals were made to the service, the information that was gathered about the referrals and, therefore, potentially, the effectiveness of the work undertaken.

## 1.2. Articulating the vision and remit

A challenge that was identified during the groundwork phase of the pilot was that the overall vision for Here and Now was either not clearly defined and communicated, or not clearly understood in the early discussions with schools. This meant that school staff were unclear about the role and remit of the service and this affected their ability to make appropriate referrals:

*"To be honest, I'm not quite sure what the overall service is. When we first spoke at the beginning of the term... [and] went over the 'Here and Now' service, although [worker] said it was to deal with pupils with bereavement issues, [they] basically just said look, there's flexibility there and there's a criteria and there was about five or six lists on the criteria so it wasn't just bereavement issues so that's what we based our criteria on, not just on pupils who had bereavement issues"* School staff

*"I never felt that the referrals, the referrals that came to myself, they were never necessary for trauma, bereavement and loss. Personally I felt... I agree the young people needed support, I didn't personally believe it was trauma, bereavement and loss"* Barnardo's staff

Participants (both Barnardo's and school staff) were therefore uncertain as to the target group of young people the service aimed to support, and at times misunderstood the original purpose of the service.

*"Things like behaviour issues, risk of exclusion, anxiety issues, that sort of thing we were referring from" School staff*

*"The main target [of the Here and Now] was to look at the impact of parental imprisonment, and not one of the [city] referrals and I don't think any of the [town] referrals actually had parental imprisonment as an issue, and when we asked schools, they were saying, that's not an issue for any of our kids" Barnardo's staff*

Some young people were also unclear about who they would be working with and the type of work they were going to be engaged in prior to meeting Here and Now staff. Any mystification soon dissipated once the young people met the project workers and time was spent developing a relationship and talking about the nature of the work together. Nevertheless, the lack of clarity around the service meant that young people sometimes arrived for support with limited preparation about what to expect. Moreover, it was also raised that the lack of clarity and information about the role of the service potentially detracted from the experience for young people in regards to the appropriateness of the service and their level of overall engagement.

*"I think when staff have got the time and the implementation to think about that, there'd be a lot of other young people that would be able to be identified and use the service" Barnardo's staff*

Thus, the findings indicate that more time spent on defining the service vision, in collaboration with the school, and sharing this vision with the wider school community at the initial stages of the project, could have contributed to more referrals that were in line with the aims of the service.

### **1.3. Working with the school culture**

A significant finding which emerged from the pilot was the recognition of the importance of being aware of, understanding and working with the wider school culture. This was deemed as integral to knowing how the Here and Now service could best be embedded within each school, working within and around the existing practices and ethos. It was acknowledged by Barnardo's staff that the schools involved in the pilot were on a learning journey in relation to trauma, bereavement and loss, with varying degrees of the necessary knowledge, confidence and skills to identify, support and refer on to specialist support for young people with trauma and bereavement and loss experiences. The original service proposal, which had included preparatory work for school staff, had been designed to support this journey, and the absence of this work was felt throughout implementation:

*"There was quite a lot of work needed to be done to get the school system thinking about trauma, bereavement and loss..." Barnardo's staff*

*" They are still at the very early stages with the trauma informed side of things and from what I've come across with the young people and some of the approaches, they're maybe not supporting the young people with their trauma quite as much as they perhaps will be as they kind of go through the experiences that they are. In some cases maybe exacerbating the trauma and things there" Barnardo's staff*



However, there were opportunities to capitalise on. Where there existed a wider understanding of trauma, bereavement and loss this was viewed by participants as facilitating the implementation of the service within the wider school model:

*"Currently there is an increase in trauma bereavement and loss issues within the school context through the work around ACEs. This is helping" Barnardo's staff*

Thus, where there was an existing understanding (albeit limited) about trauma, bereavement and loss and/or of Barnardo's approach to working with young people, the implementation of Here and Now was reported to run more smoothly. Likewise, it was identified that it was important for Barnardo's workers to acknowledge, and in instances tailor their approach to Here and Now within the school environment, in line with the school structures, staffing level and stage of knowledge, understanding and confidence around trauma, bereavement and loss:

*"So that was another way to do it rather than just send an email out saying if you've got anyone, if and when during a child planning meeting if we thought it was a requirement we would put that down as a task" School Staff*

Participants identified considerable scope and some appetite for support in creating a wider culture of acceptance and inclusion of trauma, bereavement and loss within the schools and the role of Barnardo's in doing this in the future:

*"I think we would do much more work with the school about 'look, this is knowledge skills and experience that we want the whole school to understand, how can we help that to happen?' So really thinking for example about their continuous learning and development framework, what else the schools having to learn about in an academic year say, and how bereavement, trauma and loss could fit into that" Barnardo's staff*

*"I think there are a lot of systems that would benefit from being adapted if staff were aware of that, how behaviour is managed and responded to. Also how staff take care of themselves you know when they're working in places where there are a lot of kids who have experienced bereavement or trauma. Just to make sure that they're in a place when they're working with kids who are a bit deregulated that the staff can regulate themselves to be able to help with that" Barnardo's staff*

*"So I think Barnardo's has a role to play with the staff and the expertise that they have within the staff for them just to go in and have the adults in mind for a wee bit for the young people in the future" Barnardo's staff*

Whilst this was not achieved through the pilot, it was noted that schools staff would require appropriate structures to enable the move to a more trauma-informed approach, through appropriate support and supervision. Thus while Barnardo's unique skills and knowledge around trauma, bereavement and loss were viewed as integral to raising the skills and practice of school staff, specifically at the groundwork phase, this needed to be done alongside developing appropriate structures of support for staff.



## Theme 2: The centrality of relationships

The importance of strong, trusting relationships emerged as a central theme, and whilst it is relevant to the theme above, was fundamental to embedding and facilitating Here and Now. These relationships were primarily between: Here and Now staff and school staff; Here and Now staff and young people; school staff and young people; and with external agencies.

### 2.1 Here and Now staff and school staff

Referrals into Here and Now were made directly by school staff to Barnardo's as it was acknowledged that, in most cases, schools hold a wealth of information, often at an early stage, about the wider circumstances of the family and the general wellbeing of the child. Therefore school and Barnardo's staff required a familiarity with each other and a rapport to facilitate the process and ensure relevant and timely support is provided to young people experiencing trauma, bereavement and loss. It was noted that the relationship between school and Barnardo's staff was integral in identifying and appropriately supporting young people through, where necessary, specialist support such as Here and Now. Yet, relationships develop over time, as shared knowledge and understanding of the needs of young people and the appropriateness of support develops and this was not always available.

*"Staff that went in were, they were new staff to Barnardo's, they were well qualified to deliver it but they didn't have the existing relationships with the schools, whereas I think if it was someone who had been working in that school for two, maybe three years, not working there constantly but the school knew they had worked with maybe half a dozen families and there is a different relationship and that the conversations can be a bit more nuanced..."* Barnardo's staff

*"Barnardo's is very much a relationship based approach to everything and we know that if we don't get those relationships with the people round about young people right, that it's, we're not gonna have such good success rates, so, we really wanted to invest in the relationships with the school"* Barnardo's staff

Where Barnardo's already had an existing relationship with the school communities, through wider service delivery models and programmes, relationships with new workers and understanding and trust in the Here and Now service developed more seamlessly.

*"It's been well embedded in [school] because a lot of the referrals that we have via other services for attainment and erm, family support service"* Barnardo's staff

A range of existing supports for pupils, both in-house and external, were also identified by participants, but it was unclear if or how relationships were established with these other agencies or whether Here and Now co-ordinated with these other supports. Ensuring the right fit, not just with the school, but with external agencies has the potential to contribute to more effective implementation of the service:

*"Bereavement counselling and support services are quite few and far between. We've got Richmond Hope down the road which we use their service quite a bit, whenever we have any students who speak about grief, we submit referrals to them and obviously the Barnardo's was a new project"* School staff

## 2.2 Here and Now staff and young people

The strength of the relationship between the worker and young person was noted by school staff, Barnardo's staff, young people and carers as important in developing strong bonds of trust and openness in order for young people to feel confident enough to take part in Here and Now. However, Barnardo's staff, while acknowledging the time limitations of the pilot, expressed that they would have benefited from more time to build relationships with young people prior to the intervention work beginning. The nature of the work being carried out meant that, for some young people, they were being asked to disclose and discuss issues which were particularly sensitive in instances where a trusting, mutual relationship had not been fully established.

*"To try and get a relationship with a young person when you're only seeing them maybe once every three weeks and you're asking them to pour their heart out to you, it just didn't work for me and obviously for the young people" Barnardo's worker*

*"I think there needed to be a lot of erm, work put into establishing a relationship with a younger person than maybe an 18 year old who gets why you're there, what the focus of the work's gonna be whereas somebody younger, wants to engage with you as a person, if you're the person providing that service, and is quite rightly gonna take some time to do that" Barnardo's worker*

*"I find trauma, bereavement and loss very personal to a young person. I think they have to be prepared to share a lot of stuff about their self, a lot of information about their self. To me trauma, bereavement and loss would be really really useful if someone already had a relationship with a child...Either that or we make sure before we start the trauma, bereavement and loss that we're doing that introduction properly, we're spending longer to meet the child, doing some fun exercises with them, even taking four weeks to do that and then starting trauma, bereavement and loss because for me I felt it was very very personal very very quickly. I think that was immediately a barrier for quite a lot of young people" Barnardo's worker*

School staff were also aware of the importance of Barnardo's staff building and developing relationships with young people and of the implications for the overall engagement of young people when this relationship was not established first.

*"I think there could have been a bit more done to get them on board. You saw the student at the start, how reluctant she was to speak, she was the same with Barnardo's one to one, she didn't want to go or she would skive because she knew they were coming in to speak to her. Sometimes she would go but she would really open up. The other student was the same" School staff*

In contrast to the school staff view, it was clear that young people and carers valued the personability and approachability of Here and Now staff, noting an informal and caring demeanour as helping to put them, or their child, at ease. Importantly, services which were situated as part of an existing suite of services within the school (as noted in 2.1) benefitted from the trust created through existing relationships. In one school where the Barnardo's staff member was already well known, young people spoke about 'seeing [worker] around

with other young people' and being aware of the work he was involved in and would potentially be undertaking with them.

*"I thought it was going to be this really old person asking you stuff. Not like a cool person coming in and you can like have a laugh. I didn't think you would be able to have a laugh"* Young person

*"He was quite sound so he was"* Young person

*"[young person] and [worker] just hit it off...he had a really really lovely way about him...He's just a normal guy with skills"* Carer

Young people also noted the benefit of having time to build up relationships with the Barnardo's workers: getting to know each other, becoming familiar and getting an understanding of what the service was about. Similarly, where young people were not given the opportunity to meet and develop a relationship with workers this could create anxiety and uncertainty which may limit a young person's ability to fully engage with the support offered.

*"I had my doubts like is [Here and Now worker] going to be this kind of guy or that kind of guy but obviously we spent the first week or two getting used to each other so that's what made it feel more comfortable really. Easier to talk too really"* Young person

*"I was just nervous a little bit but I don't know why I was nervous. Just because I didn't know if it was a he/she, old/young"* Young person

*"Like I have a [mentor/ befriender] so they came in and they just introduced us before we done anything. So I think maybe if they done that"* Young person

## 2.3 Young people and peers

Despite there being an apparent lack of dissemination and embedding of Here and Now within the wider school environment, young people appeared to share within their peer networks informal conversations and understandings about Here and Now.

*"I spoke to one of my pals who had spoke to [worker] because they got referred to [worker] and that's what made me feel more comfortable because he knew what he was like and he said he was a nice guy and all that and he'll get to the point but not straight away, he'll take it as slow as I want to take it and then he'll only talk about what you want to talk about which was good so then that made me feel more confident"* Young person

*"But like I wouldn't like mind getting involved for a pal to benefit them or even any young folk like if they needed someone to talk to about it then obviously I would feel confident in talking to them about it because I've experienced it so I could tell them exactly what's going to happen to them so they feel better"* Young person

Often young people were aware of peers working with staff due to the close proximity of the physical school environment, either being seen with the worker or questions being raised as the child is out of class. However, they often lacked a general awareness of Barnardo's and

the support it offers young people. They identified that the school in particular could do more to promote the support on offer to young people.

*“Through the school I would try and get them to speak more to the kids to let them know that it’s there. That’s about the only thing I would change and that’s not due to you it’s due to the school for not publicising it basically to let them know”*  
Young person

One worker noted how these peer networks were helpful in fostering engagement with young people, that after developing a rapport with one young person this could be spread through word of mouth and encourage engagement from more young people.

*“A lot of the ones I was working with all know each other ...and they could almost kind of spread the word because... the ones that I had been trying to get for a long time, they knew who I was and what it was I was doing because their pal had already told them about the work that was going on...It did break down a little bit of a barrier... because some of them were coming up to me and one of them actually introduced themselves to me before I actually knew who he was. He said oh you’re going out to see my mum because I’m going to do this work with you...”*  
Barnardo’s worker

## 2.4 Families

Within the initial design of Here and Now there was a proposed element of family support and capacity building activities building on an ecological model of support for the young person. Developing this strand of work was inevitably affected by the delays in developing the groundwork of the service. Additionally, as fewer young people engaged over a sustained period of time this limited the ability to become meaningfully acquainted with families and their needs or to deliver parental/ carer group sessions. The carer who engaged with the research spoke highly of the workers, the service and support offered to their young people; and for this carer in particular the wider support of Barnardo’s as an organisation was valued.

Workers also acknowledged the impact of the wider familial circumstances on the work they were carrying out with young people, particularly where adults’ difficulties, through substance misuse or mental health difficulties, impacted directly on the lives and behaviour of the young people.

*“You almost want to have a young person who feels secure in their family or care environment so, the more informed people are about the issues, and particularly, that young person’s experiences of the issues, the better it would be so, probably would have liked to have done more there”* Barnardo’s worker

*“We didn’t really touch on the parents with the project just because it was so short... we had planned that we would do some work with them round about bereavement and trauma to help them kind of understand as well...to make sure that they’ve had the support that they need but also they know how to support the young person with that as well”* Barnardo’s worker

Despite this, the young people who took part in the research all noted that their family/ carers were aware of both their involvement with Here and Now, and the reasons which

were underlying the need for support. One young person noted that they found it difficult to speak to their carer about their bereavements prior to their involvement with the service, however their involvement with Here and Now had helped facilitate a more open and honest relationship with their carer.

*"I wish I could have talked to like [carer] about stuff but now I can. So I think through that, I've kinda been able to talk to her more. But I wish I could have talked to [carer] before this"* Young person

### Theme 3: Building knowledge and confidence

Despite the intentions of Here and Now to support school staff in the area of trauma, bereavement and loss through capacity building activities, this aspect of the service was never developed fully in any of the pilot schools. Knowledge and confidence in relation to both identifying and supporting young people experiencing trauma, bereavement and loss, and in implementing self-care strategies was identified as a factor that had the potential to either facilitate or impede the successful implementation of Here and Now within the schools. This was relevant to both school staff and Barnardo's staff.

#### 3.1 School staff

School staff acknowledged their continual interaction with young people affected by trauma, bereavement and loss and were clear that supporting these young people was part of their role:

*"I know as a pupil support leader I would definitely engage in that type of practical advice, how to support a student with bereavement. Someone's came in and their mum's just passed away, what do you say, they're crying and you give the kids a hug and I'll say your mum wouldn't want you to be like this... just give them the space to talk but what else do you say?"* School staff

However, school staff also noted that their role, primarily as educator, leaves little opportunity for training around the impact of trauma and wellbeing, including how these experiences might affect behaviour. As a result school staff noted that they had little or no formal bereavement training, other than experiential learning over time and interaction with young people. Whilst this was potentially a barrier to their ability to identify and support young people in need, there was a clear desire by school staff for more training in this area. Training for school staff was also identified by the Barnardo's workers, who highlighted a sense of apprehension from school staff in relation to supporting young people with trauma, bereavement and loss issues.

*"I don't think we've had any particular training it's just really from our own experience. The pupil support team just through their own day to day learning on the job sort of thing. There's not been any formal training on bereavement"* School staff

*"I think a lot of staff just feel so unskilled, they're trying to be empathetic so they're saying well... but I think we need a bit more counselling, a bit more training in that aspect"* School staff



*"I think really there is a massive need for training for staff, particularly in the guidance department. I think there needs to be further training, more awareness raising I would say within the school for me for lots of areas. Whether it's trauma awareness and the impact that has on a young person, I would say definitely with bereavement as well, CSE awareness I think because they all tie in you know, there's a relation"*  
Barnardo's worker

Lack of knowledge about trauma, bereavement and loss and confidence in approaching and responding to these experiences was seen to have a detrimental impact on the referrals made to the service. Rather than young people with identified needs around trauma, bereavement and loss it was often 'the usual suspects' being referred due to their presenting behaviour, which was often characterised as disruptive and unruly.

*"I think it's the young people that they know about, erm, that are on their radar, yes, they get in, but I think there's lots of other young people obviously that maybe don't have the same, erm, needs, not displaying the same needs within school that would benefit from this service and they've maybe been missed...I think when staff have got the time and the implementation to think about that, there'd be a lot of other young people that would be able to be identified and use the service"*  
Barnardo's worker

Staff were also aware that distress could be displayed through emotional or challenging behaviour and that this could in turn impact both on staff and school wellbeing. However, they were left with little time to reflect and learn about their role in supporting young people who present with trauma. Barnardo's workers identified that school staff may feel unsupported in this area of their role and as such experience vicarious trauma which could impact on the quality of interactions with young people.

*"I think it's about staff awareness of the impact of trauma and loss. I think also, schools are so busy that staff don't often get that point to actually stop and think about what it is that's causing it. I think it's very reactive at times rather than being proactive. They don't get the same chance as we get in the third sector where you've got your regular supervision to stop and slow things down and think about right what does all of this mean and look at how you kind of go forward with it"*  
Barnardo's worker

*"I think there are a lot of systems that would benefit from being adapted if staff were aware of that, how behaviour is managed and responded to. Also how staff take care of themselves you know when there working in places where there are a lot of kids who have experienced bereavement or trauma. Just to make sure that there in a place when their working with kids who are a bit dysregulated that the staff can regulate themselves to be able to help with that. Just in terms of their own wellbeing"*  
Barnardo's worker

### 3.2 Here and Now staff

Knowledge and confidence was also considered in relation to Here and Now staff and their ability to take a responsive and pro-active approach to their position and work when identifying and addressing the needs of both the young people and the school community more broadly. As discussed above, this being a schools-based programme the relationship between Barnardo's, the school and the young people was integral to good outcomes.



Barnardo's staff therefore required the confidence, skills and support to both engender commitment to Here and Now among the schools they were working in and ensure that it was not viewed as onerous on the part of the 'host' school. Where this was done well, it helped build relationships between all groups and developing strong relationships allowed Here and Now to be embedded within the wider school environment.

*"The reception staff were absolutely brilliant; I had to get them a box of chocolates. They were really great because they really did try everything to try and get hold of the kids for us as well"* Barnardo's staff

*"Could be quite labour intensive on staff, finding kids etc. Barnardo's needed to be more proactive and embedded"* School staff

The confidence, skills and experience of the Here and Now staff also appeared to influence how they delivered the programme of work with young people. Some staff felt able to be flexible and adapt the programme to be responsive to individual young people, whereas others lacked the confidence about when and how to adapt the programme, and subsequently felt that it was too rigid and prescriptive:

*"There's enough structure there that you know the reason for each session, but there's also enough flexibility that you can adapt that to fit the young people"* Barnardo's worker

*"I personally found the layout almost too structured as in the week for week kind of thing. Personally I didn't like how uncentred it was because for me, some young people are ready to do week one to three on day one, whereas some young people aren't even ready to do session one on day one"* Barnardo's worker

Where the programme was adapted to each young person, this was noted by young people and carers as a positive experience:

*"So basically the first couple of weeks I just got to know him and he made it clear that I didn't have to do it and it was my choice. He gave me a brief outline of what he was going to cover each week and then a couple of weeks into it he started doing the family tree stuff..."* Young person

*"It was done softly, softly. It was done on the basis of you'd talk about what you wanted to talk about and if there any areas you didn't want to cover then that's fine"* Carer

It was therefore important that Barnardo's staff were confident in their role and the support they could offer in a way that supported their responsiveness to the needs of both the school and the young people; as the school staff's capacity to support this cohort of young people was noted by both staff groups to be lacking in knowledge, confidence and support.

### 3.3 Young people

For young people, Here and Now represented a protected space where they were provided with the opportunity to explore their trauma, bereavement and loss, which was an opportunity that had not been provided elsewhere. As a result young people described an

increase in confidence in sharing their bereavement experiences in future and confidence that they would be able to seek out support if required in the future.

*"I didn't expect anything, I just wanted the confidence to know that there was always going to be someone there and it did help"* Young person

*"I don't know just so I could talk about everything instead of just having it in me. If I could just talk about it... it never got it out the way but you could talk to someone about it and they don't judge you on it"* Young person

*"I think she learned how to be a little bit more open and to know that when she's talking she's maybe being listened to rather than saying oh no no forget about that, that's not important"* Carer

This correlates with Barnardo's aim of Here and Now to be a strengths-based intervention, which focuses on the strength and resilience young people have developed as a result of their experiences, and offers insight and practical support for young people in relation to coping strategies and techniques.

*"I think the strength is that it's strength-based, it is future facing, it is about acknowledging past trauma, past loss, but it's very much about supporting young people to look at the strengths they've got internally but also looking at their wider support mechanisms, so they don't become reliant on one particular system or one particular strategy. It gave young people a number of strategies, it helped them to be solution focused and it built resilience"* Barnardo's worker

This approach appeared to be valued by young people and the one carer participant. Young people showed a greater understanding of the issues that they had experienced and felt more able to talk about these with parents/carers. Moreover, young people also noted that they felt more confident in seeking support in the future, in the knowledge that services, whether Barnardo's or otherwise, could help.

## Discussion

The findings presented above identify a number of strengths and challenges that were evident in the pilot of Here and Now across the school communities that provide important opportunities for learning in relation to developing work in this area. It was apparent that trauma, bereavement and loss experiences punctuated the school community and that there was a need for developing knowledge and support in this area that would be of benefit to both the young people concerned and the school community more broadly. This need supported the pilot of Here and Now and provided a number of opportunities for developments that supported young people's experiences.

The initial groundwork phase of the pilot was viewed as requiring a significant amount of time to effectively prepare, support and embed Here and Now within the school communities. A clearly defined vision that was shared by both Barnardo's staff and school staff about what the service aimed to be was identified as significant to successfully embedding and delivering the service, however, this was not fully realised. Time spent on developing this vision was therefore viewed as essential in developing a shared

understanding about the role and remit of the service specific to the culture and functioning of each particular school. This time was seen as an important opportunity to allow staff involved in delivering Here and Now to develop relationships with school staff, young people and their families that would: enable Barnardo's staff to be aware of existing knowledge and skills around trauma, bereavement and loss within each school and how these might support or hinder service delivery; support appropriate referrals for direct intervention; develop clear referral pathways; and ensure that school staff and Barnardo's staff could work seamlessly together towards achieving a shared vision, taking forward their respective roles as either referrers or service providers.

The theme of relationships underpinned the pilot and developing trusting, sensitive and informal relationships appeared to be integral to enabling and supporting staff and young people within the wider context of the school environment. Developing strong relationships between Here and Now staff and young people reduced anxiety about accessing support, promoted engagement and disclosure, and contributed to how positively the young person experienced any intervention. Likewise, developing relationships with school staff maintained the integration of Here and Now in the school and supported referrals. The reduced time for fostering these relationships meant that the knowledge, skills and confidence needed by adults in the young person's wider environment (i.e. teachers and families) could not be developed sufficiently to encourage the identification of need, appropriate referrals to the service, or the provision of appropriate and/or complementary support to the young person.

Due to time constraints, the pilot became focused on delivering direct support to young people and this work was viewed, by young people, as a positive experience and something that they were keen to share with families and peers. Yet, the findings suggest developing the knowledge, confidence and skills of school staff around trauma, bereavement and loss may need to take equal emphasis in any future work. This was due to a recognition that increased confidence, knowledge and skills would support school staff to identify trauma, bereavement and loss issues, and in responding and referring on to specialist support, where necessary. Given the existing relationship that school staff have with young people in their care this was discussed as being important to meaningful and timely support. The lack of knowledge around trauma, bereavement and loss was noted by both Barnardo's and school staff as being related to limited opportunities for training in this area and this suggests clear practice implications around any future work with school communities. Moreover, it was also raised that if school staff are more able and confident to support trauma, bereavement and loss experiences then attention needs to be given to ensuring that appropriate and timely support is also available to staff. Such support was also relevant to Barnardo's staff so that they are able to confidently and successfully deliver a programme of work tailored to each school.

## Summary of Key Learning Points

The experiences, reflections and perspectives documented in this evaluation can be summarised into the following learning points:

- Having a clear vision and bringing people along with you is essential to implementing a new service
- Adequate time needs to be given to planning, preparation and implementation of any new service
- All services should consider how best to enhance data monitoring systems and recording systems, as a lack of data limited the conclusions that could be drawn
- Relationships need to be at the centre of all work in this area, not just with children and young people but within and between staff groups, services and systems
- In particular, the benefit of having a relationship with families should be a central consideration in any future development of any similar service
- The high levels of parental mental illness and other family adversities means that supporting parents directly will be crucial in also supporting their children and building capacity in families and society.
- Embedding Third Sector staff within schools can provide valuable space to foster new and shared work
- Developing the knowledge and skills of school staff to engage with trauma, bereavement and loss, through development sessions or supervision and support sessions for example, was seen as integral to continued development and implementation of the Here and Now model in schools.
- Staff also need to be supported and skilled and allowed the space for self-care to support this work
- The potential for developing the existing support networks young people have through peers, with the potential for future group work sessions or peer support mechanisms, is an aspect that could be explored further.

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## Appendix 1: Young person Interview Schedule

### INTRODUCTION:

Thank for coming. Introduce myself, the nature of the evaluation

Explain:

- \* Did they read the information sheet? Any questions?
- \* How long the interview will last
- \* Purpose of research
- \* Introduce the questions I will be asking
- \* Okay to interrupt if don't understand etc
- \* Reasons for recording. Is that okay?
- \* Confidentiality and anonymity
- \* What will happen with data generated (and recording)
- \* Complete Consent From

As mentioned I'm here to talk about your involvement with the Here and Now service.

### HERE AND NOW

1. How would you describe Here and Now to a friend if they asked?

Prompts: what does it do? Who does it work with?

2. How did you hear about the Here and Now Service?

Prompts; how did you decide to come along? Why now?

3. Before you started what did you think it would be like?

Prompts: How did you feel about starting?

What did you think it was about?

What did you want to get from it?

Were you worried about anything before you started?

4. What was it actually like?

What sort of things did you do/work on?

What was good/not good? Why?

5. Did you learn anything from working with Here and Now?

Prompts: New skills? Things about you? Things about other people?

If no, why do you think that you didn't learn anything? Was there anything you would have liked to have learned?

6. Have you noticed any changes in yourself since receiving support from Here and Now?

Prompts: confidence, happiness, understanding feelings, etc.

If no, is there anything that you wish Here and Now could have helped you change?

7. Is there anything that you would like to change about the Here and Now service?

Prompts: the type of support? The length of time for support? Where the service is based?

## WIDER SUPPORT AROUND DEATH AND BEREAVEMENT

8. Before coming to Here and Now did you talk to anyone else about your bereavements/feelings after someone had died?

Prompts: Parent? Friends? Teacher? Someone else? A service?

How did it feel talking to people? Was there anyone you would have liked to talk with but couldn't?

If not, was there a reason why you did not talk to anyone?

If received a support service: what did you think about that service? Was it similar or different to Here and Now. In what way? Did the support help?

9. Did you talk about the work you did with Here and Now with anyone?

Prompts: parent? Friends? Teacher? Someone else?

What did they think about it

If not, was there a reason why you did not talk to anyone about Here and Now?

10. Is there any other help you need right now in relation to your bereavement/feelings after someone had died?

If you wanted to talk to someone today about your bereavements/feelings after someone had died would you have someone to talk to? If yes, who?

If no, would you like someone to talk to? [\*if yes, mention that there will be info at the end]

Prompts: Would you get involved in something like Here and Now in the future? Why? why not?

11. Last question from me! If a friend experienced a bereavement would you recommend Here and Now to him or her?

Prompts: Why? Why not?

12. Is there anything else that you would like to say about Here and Now, or anything else?

CLOSING: Thank people for giving up their time and participating

Reiterate what will happen to data, how to withdraw and when they can expect the report.

Invite any questions and signpost to further support - hand out leaflets

Give out gift voucher and thank again.

## Appendix 2: Parent/ Carer Interview Schedule

### Interview Schedule: Parents / carers

#### INTRODUCTION:

Thank for coming. Introduce myself, the nature of the evaluation

Explain:

- Have you read the information sheet? Any questions?
- How long the interview will last
- Purpose of research
- Introduce the questions I will be asking
- Okay to interrupt if don't understand etc
- Reasons for recording. Is that okay?
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- What will happen with data generated (and recording)

#### **\*Complete Consent From**

As mentioned I'm here to talk about your child's involvement with the Here and Now service.

1. **Can you tell me a little about when and for how long your child was working with the Here and Now Service?**
2. **Before coming to Here and Now what other support did your child receive?**

Prompts: Did they receive a service? Support from organisations? what did you think about that service? Was it similar or different to Here and Now? In what way? Did the support help?

3. **How would you describe Here and Now to someone if they asked?**

Prompts: what does it do? Who does it work with?

4. **How did you hear about Here and Now?**

Prompts; what information did you receive? how did you decide this was the right service for your child? Did you talk to your child about starting Here and Now? Why did you want the support now?

5. **Before your child started what did you think the service would be like?**

Prompts: How did you feel about your child starting?

What did you think it was about?

What did you want your child to get from it?

Were you worried about anything before your child started?

**6. What was it actually like?**

Did you and your child talk about the work they were doing with Here and Now?  
Do you know what sort of things your child did/ worked on?  
Do you know what your child thought was good/ not good? Why?  
What did you think was good / not good about Here and Now?

**7. Did your child learn anything from working with Here and Now?**

Prompts: New skills? Things about themselves? Things about other people?  
If no, why do you think that they didn't learn anything? Was there anything you would have liked to have learned?

**8. Have you noticed any changes in your child since they started receiving support from Here and Now?**

Prompts: confidence, happiness, understanding feelings, relationships, behaviour etc. Why do you think that is?

If no, is there anything that you wish Here and Now could have helped change?

**9. Have you noticed any changes in yourself since your child started receiving support from Here and Now?**

Prompts: confidence, happiness, understanding feelings, relationships etc. Why do you think that is?

If no, is there anything that you wish Here and Now could have helped change?

**10. Is there anything that you would like to change about Here and Now service?**

Prompts: the type of support? The length of time for support? Where the service is based?

**11. Is there anything else that you would like to say about Here and Now, or anything else?**

CLOSING: Thank people for giving up their time and participating

Reiterate what will happen to data, how to withdraw and when they can expect the report.

Invite any questions and signpost to further support - hand out leaflets

Give out gift voucher and thank again.

## Appendix 3: School Staff Interview Schedules

\* Introductions: Name, role, years working at School

First we will ask some questions about bereavement support in your school in general, and then we will move to focus specifically on Here and Now.

1. If you had to pick three words, how would you describe your school? [GSE]
2. To what extent is childhood bereavement an issue in your school? [SP]
3. To what extent do you consider supporting children and young people with pre and post bereavement experiences as part of your role? [SP]

Prompts: Why? If not, who? [SP]

Prompts: What about death education? [SS]

4. What, if any, training, knowledge or skills do you have in supporting children and young people pre and post bereavement? [SS]

Prompts: any gaps?

- 5a) What elements of the school and school culture help you to support the needs of bereaved children? [GSE] [SP]

Prompts: leadership, training, supervision, physical environment, relationships, morale; staff expertise, bereavement policy etc [SS]

- 5b) What elements of the school and school culture do not help you to support the needs of bereaved children? [GSE] [SP]

Prompts: leadership, training, supervision, physical environment, relationships, morale; staff expertise, bereavement policy etc [SS]

6. Before Here and Now, what bereavement support existed in the school? [SP]

[H&N]

7. Can you describe the Here and Now service? [H&N]

Prompts: general awareness

Prompts: purpose, processes, content/methods

8. What has your experience of the Here & Now service been? [H&N]

Prompts: strengths? Weaknesses?



Prompts: implementation, communication, ease of use, relationships with staff, relevance to pupils' needs etc etc

9. Have you seen any changes since Here and Now started? [H&N]

Prompts: for pupils? Outcomes? Engagement? Etc [H&N] [SP]

Prompts: for you as staff? Your skills? Confidence? [H&N] [SS]

Prompts: for the wider school? [H&N] [GSE]

Prompts: Why do you think that is [H&N]

10. What else can be done to improve bereavement support to pupils in your school?

[SP]

[H&N] Prompts: By Here and Now?

Prompts: by school staff?

Prompts: by others?

11. Anything else?